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The Security Council,

Reaffirming its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, 1379 (2001) or 20 November 2001, 1460 (2003) of 30 January 2003, 1539 (2004) of 22 April 2004, 1612 (2005) of 26 July 2005, 1882 (2009) of 4 August 2009, 1998 (2011) of 12 July 2011, 2068 (2012) of 19 September 2012, 2143 (2014) of 7 March 2014, and all relevant Statements of its President, which contribute to a comprehensive framework for addressing the protection of children affected by armed conflict,

Reiterating its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and, in this connection, its commitment to address the widespread impact of armed conflict on children,

Acknowledging that its resolutions, their implementation and the Statements of its President on children and armed conflict as well as the conclusions of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict have generated progress in preventing and responding to violations and abuses committed against children, in particular in the demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of thousands of children, the signing of action plans between parties to armed conflict and the delisting of parties to conflict from the Annexes to the Secretary-General's annual report,

Remaining however deeply concerned over the lack of progress on the ground in some situations of concern, where parties to conflict continue to violate with impunity the relevant provisions of applicable international law relating to the rights and protection of children in armed conflict,

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Recalling that all parties to armed conflict must comply strictly with the obligations applicable to them under international law for the protection of children in armed conflict, including those contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of Children in armed conflict, as well as the Geneva Conventions of 12th August 1949 and the Additional Protocols of 1977,

Convinced that the protection of children in armed conflict should be an important aspect of any comprehensive strategy to resolve conflict and build peace and *stressing also* the importance of adopting a broad strategy of conflict prevention, which addresses the root causes of armed conflict in a comprehensive manner in order to enhance the protection of children on a long-term basis,

Stressing the primary role of Governments in providing protection and relief to all children affected by armed conflict and *recognizing* the importance of strengthening national capacities in this regard,

Reiterating that all action undertaken by United Nations entities within the framework of the monitoring and reporting mechanism must be designed to support and supplement, as appropriate, the protection and rehabilitation roles of national Governments,

Recognizing also the important roles that local leaders and civil society networks can play in enhancing community-level protection and rehabilitation, including non-stigmatization, for children affected by armed conflict,

Recalling the responsibility of all Member States to comply with their respective obligations to end impunity and to investigate and prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other egregious crimes perpetrated against children and *noting* that the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern committed against children has been strengthened through the work on and prosecution of these crimes by the International Criminal Court, ad hoc and mixed tribunals and specialized chambers in national tribunals,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 8 June 2015 (S/2015/409) and *stressing* that the present resolution does not seek to make any legal determination as to whether situations which are referred to in the Secretary-General's report are or are not armed conflicts within the context of the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols thereto, nor does it prejudge the legal status of the non-State parties involved in these situations,

Expressing grave concern over the abduction of children in situations of armed conflict, the majority of which are perpetrated by non-State armed groups, *recognizing* that abductions occur in a variety of settings, including schools, *further recognizing* that abduction often precedes or follows other abuses and violations of applicable international law against children, including those involving recruitment and use, killing and maiming, as well as rape and other forms of sexual violence, which may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity, and *calling on* all Member States to hold perpetrators of abductions accountable,

Gravely concerned by the human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law committed by non-state armed groups, in particular violent extremist groups, including mass abductions, rape and other forms of sexual

violence such as sexual slavery, particularly targeting girls, which can cause displacement and affect access to education and healthcare services, and emphasizing the importance of accountability for such abuses and violations,

Noting that Article 35 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child calls for States Parties to take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form,

Gravely concerned by the detrimental effects of the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons on children in armed conflict, in particular due to recruitment and use of children by parties to armed conflict, as well as their re-recruitment, killing and maiming, rape and other sexual violence, abductions, attacks on schools and hospitals in violation of international law,

Stressing that the best interests of the child as well as the specific needs and vulnerabilities of children should be considered when planning and carrying out actions concerning children in situations of armed conflict,

Recalling the obligations of all parties to armed conflict applicable to them under international humanitarian law and human rights law, *emphasizing* that no child should be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily and *calling* on all Parties to conflict to cease unlawful or arbitrary detention as well as torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment imposed on children during their detention,

Recognizing the importance of providing timely and appropriate reintegration and rehabilitation assistance to children affected by armed conflict, while ensuring that the specific needs of girls as well as children with disabilities are addressed, including access to health care, psychosocial support, and education programmes that contribute to the well-being of children and to sustainable peace and security,

Calling on all parties to conflict to respect the civilian character of schools as such in accordance with international humanitarian law,

1. *Strongly condemns* all violations of applicable international law involving the recruitment and use of children by parties to armed conflict as well as their rerecruitment, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, abductions, attacks against schools and hospitals as well as denial of humanitarian access by parties to armed conflict and all other violations of international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law, committed against children in situations of armed conflict and demands that all relevant parties immediately put an end to such practices and take special measures to protect children;

2. *Reaffirms* that the monitoring and reporting mechanism will continue to be implemented in situations listed in annex I and annex II ("the annexes") to the reports of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict, in line with the principles set out in paragraph 2 of its resolution 1612 (2005), and that its establishment and implementation shall not prejudge or imply a decision by the Security Council as to whether or not to include a situation on its agenda;

3. *Recalls* paragraph 16 of its resolution 1379 (2001) and requests the Secretary-General also to include in the annexes to his reports on children and

armed conflict those parties to armed conflict that engage, in contravention of applicable international law, in patterns of abduction of children in situations of armed conflict, bearing in mind all other violations and abuses against children, and notes that the present paragraph will apply to situations in accordance with the conditions set out in paragraph 16 of its resolution 1379 (2001);

4. *Calls* upon those parties listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict that commit violations and abuses against children in contravention of applicable international law, including abductions of children in situations of armed conflict, to prepare and adopt without delay, concrete time-bound action plans to halt those violations and abuses in collaboration with the United Nations;

5. *Urges* for the immediate, safe and unconditional release of abducted children by all Parties to conflict and encourages Member States, United Nations entities, and regional and sub-regional organizations to undertake relevant efforts to obtain the safe release of abducted children, including through establishing standard operating procedures on the handover of children to relevant civilian child protection actors, as well as to seek to ensure their family reunification, rehabilitation and reintegration;

6. *Encourages* Member States to consider non-judicial measures as alternatives to prosecution and detention that focus on the rehabilitation and reintegration for children formerly associated with armed forces and armed groups taking into account that deprivation of liberty of children should be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time, as well as to avoid wherever possible the use of pretrial detention for children;

7. *Expresses deep concern* that the military use of schools in contravention of applicable international law may render schools legitimate targets of attack, thus endangering the safety of children and in this regard encourages Member States to take concrete measures to deter such use of schools by armed forces and armed groups;

8. *Stresses* the importance of regular and timely consideration of violations and abuses committed against children in armed conflict, in this regard welcomes the sustained activity of its Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and invites the Working Group to make full use of tools within its mandate to promote the protection of children affected by armed conflict, including through increasing engagement with concerned Member States, in light of ongoing discussions on enhancing compliance;

9. *Continues to urge* Member States, United Nations entities, regional and sub-regional organizations and other parties concerned to ensure that child protection provisions, including those relating to the release and reintegration of children formerly associated with armed forces or armed groups, are integrated into all peace negotiations, ceasefire and peace agreements, and in provisions for ceasefire monitoring;

10. *Welcomes* the progress made under the "Children, Not Soldiers" campaign towards ending and preventing the recruitment and use of children by Government armed forces in conflict by 2016, further urges concerned Governments to continue to undertake all efforts in order to ensure that no children are in their

ranks in conflict, and calls on Member States, all relevant United Nations entities, NGOs and the donor community to support the campaign in their various capacities;

11. *Invites* the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to update the Security Council on the campaign "Children, Not Soldiers" as well as on the progress made in the signing and implementation of action plans or commitments by non-State armed groups, including about the process and progress in delisting concerned parties;

12. *Urges* all parties concerned, including Member States, United Nations entities, as well as financial institutions to support, as appropriate, bearing in mind national ownership, the development and strengthening of the capacities of national institutions and local civil society networks for advocacy, protection and rehabilitation of children affected by armed conflict as well as national accountability mechanisms with timely, sustained and adequate resources and funding;

13. *Urges* concerned Member States, when undertaking security sector reforms, to mainstream child protection, such as the inclusion of child protection in military training and standard operating procedures, including on the handover of children to relevant civilian child protection actors, the establishment of child protection units in national security forces, and the strengthening of effective age assessment mechanisms to prevent underage recruitment, while stressing in the latter regard the importance of ensuring universal birth registration, including late birth registration which should remain an exception;

14. *Emphasizes* the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to investigate and prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other egregious crimes perpetrated against children and highlights in this regard the contribution of the International Criminal Court, in accordance with the principle of complementarity to national criminal jurisdictions as set out in the Rome Statute;

15. *Recognizes* the role of United Nations peacekeeping operations and political missions in the protection of children, particularly the crucial role of child protection advisers in mainstreaming child protection and leading monitoring, prevention and reporting efforts in missions, and in this regard reiterates its decision to continue the inclusion of specific provisions for the protection of children in the mandates of all relevant United Nations peacekeeping operations and political missions, encourages deployment of child protection advisers to such missions, and calls upon the Secretary-General to ensure that the need for and the number and roles of such advisers are systematically assessed during the preparation and renewal of each United Nations peacekeeping operation and political mission;

16. *Calls* for the continued implementation by United Nations peacekeeping operations of the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of their personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary action in this regard and to keep the Security Council informed, and urges troop-contributing countries to continue taking appropriate preventive action, such as mandatory pre-deployment child protection training including on sexual exploitation and abuse, and to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel;

17. *Further urges* all United Nations entities, including peacekeeping missions, political missions, peacebuilding offices, United Nations offices, agencies, funds and programmes to give full attention to violations against children in the application of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on United Nations Support to non-United Nations Security Forces;

18. *Reiterates* its requests to the Secretary-General to continue to submit comprehensive annual reports to the Council on the implementation of its resolutions and Presidential statements on children and armed conflict and to ensure that in all his reports on country-specific situations the matter of children and armed conflict is included as specific aspect of the report;

19. *Decides* to remain actively seized of this matter.